

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b), also enclosed, in Appendix A, is a version of the above replacement paragraphs marked-up to show all the changes relative to the deleted paragraphs.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please delete claims 9-16 and 35 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1-8, 17-23, 27-28 and 30-33. A clean version of the amended claims is set forth below. In accordance with 37 CFR § 1.121(b), also enclosed, in Appendix B, is a marked up version of these claims to show amendments made in them:

1. (Once Amended) A hydrogel for use in the treatment or prevention of arthritis, said hydrogel comprising about 0.5 to 25% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

2. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1, which is made by combining acrylamide and methylene bis-acrylamide in a molar ratio of 150:1 to 1000:1.

3. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1, comprising less than 15% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

4. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 3 comprising at least 1% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

5. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1 further comprising at least 75% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

6. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1 comprising at least 80% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

7. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1 having a complex viscosity of 2 to 25 Pa s.

8. (Once Amended) The hydrogel according to claim 1 having a complex viscosity less than 25 Pa s and an elasticity modulus less than 200 Pa.

17. (Once Amended) A method of treating or preventing arthritis comprising administering a hydrogel to a mammal, said hydrogel comprising 0.5 to 25% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

18. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel is obtained by combining acrylamide and methylene bis-acrylamide in a molar ratio of 150:1 to 1000:1.

19. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel comprises less than 15% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

20. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 19, wherein the hydrogel comprises at least 1% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

21. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel has a complex viscosity of about 2 to 25 Pa s.

22. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel further comprises at least 75% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

23. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 22, wherein the hydrogel comprises at least 80% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

27. (Once Amended) A prosthetic device comprising about 0.5 to 25% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel, said device administered to the intra-articular cavity of a joint.

28. (Once Amended) The prosthetic device according to claim 27, wherein the hydrogel further comprises at least 75% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

29. (Once Amended) A prosthetic device for augmenting or replacing cartilage in the intra-articular cavity of a joint, said device comprises a polyacrylamide hydrogel comprising about 0.5 to 25% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

30. (Once Amended) The prosthetic device according to claim 27, wherein the hydrogel further comprises at least 75% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

31. (Once Amended) The prosthetic device according to claim 27, implanted or injected into an intra-articular cavity of a joint.

Please add new claims 36-44 as follows:

36. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel comprises at least 75% by weight pyrogen-free water.

37. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel comprises at least 90% by weight pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

38. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel comprises at least 75% by weight saline solution.

39. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the hydrogel has a complex viscosity of about 2 to 25 Pa s.

40. (New) The prosthetic device according to claims 27 or 29 which is used for treating arthritis or augmenting or replacing cartilage in the intra-articular cavity of a joint.

41. (New) The hydrogel according to claim 1, obtainable under conditions of radical initiation and washing with pyrogen-free water or saline solution.

42. (New) The hydrogel according to claim 1, comprising less than 3.5% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

43. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the hydrogel comprises less than 3.5% by weight polyacrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

44. (New) The hydrogel according to claim 1, obtainable by combining acrylamide and methylene-bis-acrylamide in amounts so as to give about 0.5 to 25% by weight acrylamide, based on the total weight of the hydrogel.

REMARKS

**I. SPECIFICATION IS AMENDED TO CORRECT INFORMALITIES.
CLAIMS ARE AMENDED PRIMARILY TO PLACE THEM IN U.S. FORMAT.**

Applicant amended the specification to correct minor errors and informalities. Applicant also amended some claims primarily to place them in a format recommended for U.S. patent practice. All amendments are supported by the specification as filed, considered as a whole. For example, amendments of claims 1, 27 and 29 are supported by the disclosure at page 3, lines 1-5 and page 4, line 13.

Applicant cancelled claims 9-16 and 35 with reservation of all of Applicant's rights to pursue the subject matter of these claims in this or any related applications.